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region's future*

October 20, 2006

Chairman Kevin Martin
Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner,

Latinos are an important and fast-growing segment of South Carolina's population and economy. Additionally, Latinos are increasingly dependent upon advanced broadband technologies to grow their businesses, educate themselves and their children and communicate with family and friends, near and far.

To ensure advancement of broadband technologies to the Hispanic community, The Hispanic Council of the Greater Summerville/Dorchester County Chamber of Commerce strongly encourages approval of the merger of BellSouth and AT&T. The merger of these great companies will offer far-reaching benefits for Hispanics. It promises to bring about *affordable* and *universal* broadband access for all citizens of South Carolina, including those in low income and rural areas.

I especially appreciate the fact that, as a proposed condition of the merger, AT&T/BellSouth have committed to provide customers a broadband offering with a speed of up to 768 kbps at a monthly rate of \$10 and to make broadband Internet access available to *all* of the residential units in its footprint. This will enrich the lives of all citizens, including Latinos, and will foster the economic success and prosperity of Hispanic businesses with whom our Council works.

I urge the Commission to quickly approve the merger of AT&T and BellSouth so that Hispanic businesspeople and their families can soon benefit from the promise of affordable and widespread broadband technology.

Sincerely,

Vivian M. Barajas
Director of Hispanic Council